



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**COMMISSION ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS**  
*COMISIÓN DE ASUNTOS HISPANOS*

Pasco  
Study Session  
Minutes  
March 12, 2004

**Roll Call:**

Commissioners present: Leo Gaeta, Gabriel Banfi, Uriel Iniguez, Yvonne Lopez Morton, Karla Padilla-Reyna, Faviola Barbosa, Gabriel Portugal, Homero Tamez and Rebecca Villareal.

Commissioners absent: Diana Avalos

Staff present: Antonio Ginatta, Vita Echeverria

**Joint Commission Meeting Follow Up:**

- Staff completed Joint Commissions Roster.
- Antonio set up the Joint Commissions listserv and will be the moderator
- Commissioners discussed moving the Legislative Reception to November. Legislators are in Olympia for a committee weekend during November, and they might be less busy and more available than during actual session.

Commissioners raised the issue of more potential joint meetings. Leo warned that we need to be cautious about spending too much time with the other minority commissions. Policymakers might believe that the minority commissions should be combined (as was suggested in the past) if they are working together with several joint meetings.

The executive directors should meet together and identify one or two main issues of common concern and then they can share that information with their respective agencies. The executive directors and the chairs of the boards will both be involved with the planning of the joint legislative events.

We may want to consider taking a more involved role in next year's LEAP Legislative Conference, potentially combining it with our January public meeting.

Commissioners suggested meeting in Olympia in November to refine the CHA legislative priorities in preparation for the legislative session. CHA would focus on

Olympia and state legislative issues from January to April, and the rest of the year will focus on the other communities in the state.

Faviola and Leo shared Jorge Chacon's comment at the recent immigration forum in Wenatchee. Jorge said that much outreach to the Latino community asks for Latinos to go to Olympia, but there should be just as much effort by Olympia to come to the Latino communities.

Gabriel suggested a potential change to the format of the Commission, having three commissioners in Olympia and then the rest of the available positions throughout other parts of the state. The Olympia commissioners would be able to help with the legislative issues. Commissioners expressed the concern that Olympia commissioners would have too much power while other important areas of state would go unrepresented.

### **Spokane Meeting Dates:**

Yvonne would like to change the meeting dates to May 21 and 22. Spokane will host several Hispanic celebrations during that weekend and the Commission should take advantage of the fact of those events.

Thursday, May 20: Hispanic Scholarship Ceremony, HBPA

Friday, May 21: Study Session. "Soul of Mexico" exhibit opening.

Saturday, May 22: Public meeting. El Centro de Spokane Anniversary Dinner.

**Action Step:** A commissioner will make a motion to change dates for Spokane meetings.

### **Annual Report:**

Antonio and Leo asked committee chairs to start working on getting their products ready for the annual report. The Report should be available by June 15. Commissioners need to get professional photographs taken so that they can be included in the report for this year.

**Action Step:** Committee chairs will get their information to Antonio by April 30<sup>th</sup> and then Antonio will have a draft done by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Gabriel B. discussed Governor Locke's support for CHA's involvement in federal issues. We understood the Governor to state that involvement in federal issues is not only welcome but also expected because of the mission of the CHA to represent the Latino community at all levels of government.

### **Commissioner Activities Report:**

Leo reminded commissioners that they are required to turn in an activity report by each meeting.

**CHA Public Meeting Format Discussion:**

Leo discussed the structure of public meetings. Each commissioner knows their community best and should set up the public meetings in their regions to their specific needs. We should encourage speakers but limit guest speakers to three or four per meeting and then let the public have enough time to address the Commission. Our primary role is to listen to the community's concerns.

The business portion of the meeting tomorrow will only be about 30-45 minutes.

Gabriel B. suggested that it would be best to remain flexible in public meeting formats, depending on the needs of the communities.

**Presenting Topics To The Commission For Action:**

Committees are the focal points for substantive issues addressed by the CHA. There may be crisis issues that may require a quick response, and in that case those commissioners receiving the crisis information need to communicate immediately with the ED or Chair.

Commissioners should complete community request forms so that they can track their community contacts.

**Other Items:**

Brewster: Faviola attended a PAC meeting with students, parents, school administrators and representatives from the local police. The school is moving forward with cultural awareness training for all of their staff (possibly Jim Tiffany). Guest speakers will also be addressing gang violence.

CHA needs to follow up with Maria from LULAC on further action on the issue. We also need to track progress on our advice. *Action Step:* Faviola will follow up with Maria from LULAC and Kelly from the Wenatchee World.

Kennewick: Commissioner Tamez had a meeting with the school superintendent and director of education. At the meeting Tamez included some members from the community to talk about the expulsion of some students.

Commissioner Tamez continued to work with the Kennewick High School Principal Jack Anderson and Ms. Othene Bell, Director of Secondary Education and has learned that the students involved in the incident have apologized to the school and each other and all is working out well for all. Tamez recently discussed having a final meeting with Mr. Anderson and Ms. Bell, which we hope will result in our putting out a statement to the Hispanic community.

Commissioner Tamez found out that the administrators were addressing a family that was different than the one he thought that the issue was about.

Leo stated that Commissioner Portugal would be excused from addressing this issue because he works for the school district.

Commissioner Lopez-Morton suggested that CHA should look into other school districts equity office information.

Mattawa Childcare providers: Chair Gaeta updated the commissioners on the mishandled DSHS investigations of the Mattawa childcare providers. Currently, the new problem is that DSHS is sending overpayment notices to many of the providers. Chair Gaeta and Director Ginatta will follow up with Secretary Braddock regarding stopping the overpayment accusations, releasing the DSHS internal investigation report, and following up on advice given in the recent CHA letter to DSHS>

**Action Step:** Director Ginatta will try to schedule a meeting with Braddock to do the follow up.

Commissioner Banfi stated concern that the joint study session minutes do not reflect the language that the governor had used in defining CHA's role on federal issues. The minutes should state as follows: Working with the federal government is not only welcome but expected, as the mission of the agencies state that all minority commissions should advise all levels of government, including the federal government. Commissioners agreed.

**Conclusion:**

Each committee chair will give a 3 to 5 minute report about their committee at the Saturday public meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm